

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00
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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5122

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, UK

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: AIRPORT USER CHARGES EFFECTIVE
APRIL 1

1. (BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED) NEW AIRPORT USER CHARGES CAME INTO EFFECT APRIL 1, 1978. OVERALL, ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, THEY REPRESENT AN INCREASE OF 8 PER CENT, RATHER THAN THE 15 PER CENT THE BRITISH AIRPORTS AUTHORITY HAD PROPOSED LAST FALL.

2. THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE CHARGE STRUCTURE ARE THESE:

A. THE DISTANCE ELEMENT HAS BEEN REMOVED FROM THE WEIGHT CHARGE FOR THE LONDON ("SOUTH-EAST") AIRPORTS, BUT NOT FOR SCOTTISH AIRPORTS. HOWEVER, WHEREAS PREVIOUSLY THE CHARGE IN THE SOUTH-EAST WAS THE SAME FOR EACH TON OVER 50, IT IS NOW DOUBLED FOR EACH TON OVER 160. OFF-PEAK LANDINGS CONTINUE TO PAY HALF THE NORMAL CHARGE AT LONDON AIRPORTS.

B. GATWICK'S PEAK PASSENGER CHARGE, IN ADDITION TO BEING IN EFFECT ONLY ON SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, JULY TO SEPTEMBER, IS ONLY TWO POUNDS PER PASSENGER ARRIVING OR DEPARTING, COMPARED WITH 2.70 POUNDS AT HEATHROW.

C. BETWEEN 0830 AND 1069 GMT AT HEATHROW, EACH
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MINUTE WILL COUNT AS 1-1/2 MINUTES IN THE COMPUTATION OF PARKING CHARGES. (END UNCLASSIFIED)

3. THE BAA'S CHIEF ECONOMIST SAID APRIL 12 THAT HE UNDERSTANDS THAT U.S. AIRLINES ARE REASONABLY SATISFIED WITH THE NEW CHARGE STRUCTURE, AT LEAST AS AN INTERIM MEASURE. THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT

THE U.S. AIRLINES, IN THE INTEREST OF RELATIONS WITH OTHER AIRLINES, WOULD NOT PUSH FOR PERFECTION THIS YEAR. HOWEVER, WE NOTE THAT AN EARLIER VERSION OF THE BAA PROPOSAL ADOPTED CHARGED EACH TON OVER 160 TONS JUST 1.5 TIMES THE RATE FOR THE PREVIOUS BRACKET, RATHER THAN 2 TIMES. MOREOVER, WE ASSUME THAT NORTHWEST WILL OBJECT TO PRESERVATION OF THE DISTANCE CRITERION FOR SCOTTISH AIRPORTS.

4. (BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED) THREE COPIES OF BAA PAMPHLET ON CONDITIONS OF USE OF BAA AIRPORTS, INCLUDING AIRCRAFT CHARGES, BEING POUCHED EB/OA/AVP FOR DISTRIBUTION TO INTERESTED WASHINGTON AGENCIES. (END UNCLASSIFIED)

BREWSTER

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